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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 28 May 1991, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. ELIASSON (Sweden)

CONTENTS

United Nations University (continued)

Cartography (continued)

Emergency assistance to Somalia

Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY (continued) (E/1991/15)

The PRESIDENT said that, as there was no draft resolution on the agenda item in question, he would take it that the Council decided to take note of the report of the Council of the United Nations University (E/1991/15).

It was so decided.

The Council had thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 4.

CARTOGRAPHY (agenda item 5 (b)) (continued) (E/1991/51)

Ms. COOMBS (New Zealand) noted that cartography provided a very useful approach to essential development issues which the United Nations sought to resolve on a priority basis. Efforts undertaken in the field of urbanization, population or housing, for example, must be based on cartographic data. Cartography even had its place in the settlement of disputes and the maintenance of peace, as demonstrated by the recent establishment of the Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission, on which the Surveyor-General of New Zealand had been invited to serve. Regional meetings of cartographers were a useful means of exchanging new information and ideas, and New Zealand had participated with great interest in the Twelfth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific, held in Bangkok in February 1991.

Cartographers in New Zealand had developed new techniques which could be of benefit to other countries, particularly less developed countries whose land resources were limited. Graphical and digital orthophotography had produced a valuable map base for the management of utilities (electricity, water, sewerage, urban tranport, emergency assistance) in rapidly growing cities. That technique also afforded a better understanding of land occupation. Major advances had also been made in the implementation of land and geographical information systems, which had resulted in digital

(Ms. Coombs, New Zealand)

topographic mapping and cadastral mapping. A very steep learning curve had been surmounted in that field, and it had become cost-effective. Private companies or local authorities were able to acquire digital information established by cartographers for added value applications (engineering, urban design, pollution control and town planning). New Zealand had restructured its cartographic production in the interest of greater cost-effectiveness, for the artificially low prices of articles produced were synonymous with perceived low value. Other countries were also requesting information from the authorities of New Zealand in the hope of reducing government funding while maintaining quality cartographic services.

New Zealand had gained some experience in the development of land information systems for societies where the ownership of tribal land was the main form of tenure: those systems often coped with conflicting, purely verbal boundary definitions related to physical topographic features. Global positioning systems (GPS), implemented for several years, yielded very precise maps. It was often more cost-effective to use those systems than to use conventional methods. GPS were also of great use in refining the location of islands and reefs. They were also being used to measure earth deformation caused by tectonic plate movement.

The cartographers of New Zealand looked forward to exchanging information with their colleagues in Asia and the Pacific. New Zealand was interested in hosting a technical meeting in 1993 prior to the Thirteenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific.

The PRESIDENT said that, as there was no draft resolution on that agenda item, he would take it that the Council wished to take note of the report of the Secretary-General on the Twelfth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific (E/1991/51).

It was so decided.

The Council had thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 5.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO SOMALIA (E/1991/L.21)

Mr. LUKABU KHABOUJI N'ZAJI (Zaire) introduced the draft resolution on emergency assistance to Somalia (E/1991/L.21) on behalf of its sponsors, which had been joined by China and Tunisia. The serious difficulties currently faced by Somalia were very well known. The affected populations were not only Somalian, for that complex situation encompassed the entire region. He thanked Governments and non-governmental organizations for the humanitarian assistance provided to Somalia and expressed the hope that the Council would adopt the draft resolution without a vote.

The PRESIDENT said that the Council would take a decision on the draft resolution at a future meeting.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SECOND DECADE TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (continued) (E/1991/L.39, E/1991/L.19)

Ms. KSENTINI (Algeria) said that the establishment of an appropriate framework for ensuring the follow-up of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination was very much to the credit of the United Nations. In that same spirit, the General Assembly had adopted a programme to combat racism, for combating all forms of discrimination, particularly apartheid, which had been a scourge for more than half a century, was considered a priority by the international community. Rightly branded a crime against humanity, institutionalized apartheid was the most odious form of racism. The Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, adopted by the General Assembly at its sixteenth special session, had set forth objectives which were still valid and which could not be attained unless apartheid were aboli ıed. However, the measures recently taken by the South African Government, however encouraging, were still partial, as had been stressed by the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1991/21. The Commission on Human Rights had also noted the harmful effects of acts of aggression and destabilization committed by South Africa against front-line States, particularly Angola and Mozambique, and had noted that the process of change was threatened by violence. The violence taking hold in South Africa only served to expose the obstacles placed in the path of the process unfolding. Vigilance was

(Ms. Ksentini, Algeria)

therefore absolutely necessary, for the progress achieved was the result of applying pressure. It would therefore be premature to ease the sanctions before apartheid was completely dismantled.

The lot of the Palestinian people subjected for 40 years to Israeli practices in the occupied territories was equally distressing. The repressive policy, elevated to a system of Government by the occupying Power, stemmed from the deliberate desire to break any vague revolutionary spirit and stifle the intifadah. Its ancestral lands plundered, stripped of its assets, uprooted, deprived of its identity and reduced to statelessness, the Palestinian people was threatened with genocide. The Israeli regime countered the demands of the Palestinian people fighting under the leadership of the PLO, its legitimate representative, with savage repression. The most impartial observers had noted intolerable practices of that regime. The Palestinian population had been dispossessed of its assets for the benefit of immigrants from other continents, with a view to changing the physical characteristics and demographic composition of the occupied territories. The establishment of new settlements in order to populate the area was an indication of the real intentions of the Israeli authorities. The United Nations bore a special responsibility towards the Palestinian people, which was very obviously committed to peace and resolved to pursue its struggle under the aegis of the PLO for the exercise of its right to self-determination.

The upsurge of racism and xenophobia against migrant workers was also cause for concern. Her delegation therefore attached great importance to the draft final version of a handbook of recourse procedures for victims of racism and racial discrimination (E/1991/39, para. 85). She hoped that the activities planned for the Decade would be carried out, particularly the global study, yet to be begun, of the extent to which the children of migrant workers were able to receive education in their mother tongue. It was regrettable that the conclusions of the seminar on cultural dialogue between the countries of origin and the host countries of migrant workers, held at Athens in September 1989, had not been put to better use in the interests of a better understanding of the problems of emigration. Her delegation supported

(Ms. Ksentini, Algeria)

the request made to the Secretary-General to organize, in 1991, a meeting of representatives of national institutions and organizations that encouraged tolerance and harmony and combated racism, to permit an exchange of experience. She welcomed the adoption by the General Assembly of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and hoped that it would soon enter into force.

The implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, which was to end in 1993, had been far from satisfactory. The Centre for Human Rights must be given the necessary human and financial resources and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination must be put on a sound financial footing. A financial effort was needed if the struggle against racism was to continue.

Ms. THORPE (Trinidad and Tobago) said that her Government was encouraged by the increasing number of nations that had become parties to the international human rights instruments. However, much more still needed to be done. In South Africa, racism and racial discrimination remained cornerstones of the Constitution, posing a major challenge to the well-being of the people of that country and to the authority of the United Nations. Some changes had indeed been instituted in recent months, but they did not warrant a change in the collective approach to the implementation of the objectives of the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. The total elimination of apartheid must continue to be accorded priority among the varied activities of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade. A survey of the situation in South Africa would confirm that apartheid still persisted to a large extent: despite the racist regime's pronouncements, the pillars of the apartheid system were still intact, including such repressive legislation as the Public Safety Act and the Internal Security Acts. Some political prisoners remained on death row and hundreds more were still involved in ongoing political trials. The international community could not turn a blind eye to the torture of political detainees, to the practice of incommunicado detention or to extrajudicial executions. The laws that permitted such reprehensible acts had

(Ms. Thorpe, Trinidad and Tobago)

to be repealed, and the United Nations was right to accord high priority to the elimination of apartheid.

The United Nations should also remain an active participant in the ongoing process of preparing the majority population of South Africa for its responsibilities after liberation. Resources should continue to be channelled towards the education of the oppressed majority, whether domiciled in South Africa or living in exile. In that regard, close cooperation with the African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress was indispensable. It was imperative that Member States adhere strictly to the principles and objectives contained in the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, adopted in 1989. It was widely acknowledged that the current process of change in South Africa was attributable to the effectiveness of the anti-apartheid campaign undertaken by millions of South Africans at home and abroad, and of the sanctions and other restrictive measures imposed against South Africa. Further progress could not be made by discarding the very tools that had facilitated those recent successes. Her Government therefore stood by its commitment to continue existing sanctions until there was clear evidence of profound and irreversible change in South Africa. It also applauded the efforts of the liberation movements to address the critical issues of State-sponsored and other violence and to elaborate the mechanisms and modalities required for a smooth transfer of power to a legitimate government.

Mr. SERGIWA (Observer for the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that his country emphasized the need for progress on the global compilation of national legislation against racism and racial discrimination and the preparation of model legislation for the guidance of Member States in the enactment of further legislation against racial discrimination. It was also important to teach young people about the origins and nature of racism and racial discrimination by making greater use of the media, cultural organizations and educational institutions.

Despite the international community's efforts to eliminate racism and racial discrimination, millions of people were still victims of such crimes

(Mr. Sergiwa, Observer, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

against humanity. In southern Africa, the Pretoria regime continued its repression, despite certain positive changes that had come about recently, such as Namibia's accession to independence, the release of Nelson Mandela and certain other political prisoners, the unbanning of ANC and the lifting of the state of emergency in certain areas of the country. It was necessary, therefore, to maintain the economic, political and military sanctions imposed by the international community against the South African regime.

In occupied Palestine, the Zionist entity had institutionalized discrimination against the Palestinians. The Nationality Law of 1952 stipulated that any Jew had an automatic right to acquire Israeli citizenship upon his arrival in the "State of Israel", and Zionist ideology was founded on the erroneous notion of a "chosen people". The similarity between the Pretoria regime and the Zionist entity was illustrated by their aggressive and expansionist policies and by their cooperation in all areas, including nuclear power, which posed a grave threat to the security of Africa and the Middle East.

The Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination was nearing an end without having achieved its goals. The General Assembly must therefore take the necessary measures to launch, in 1993, a Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination.

His country had repeatedly condemned policies based on racism and racial discrimination and had insisted on the need to take all necessary steps to eliminate them totally. It was a party to all international conventions calling for the abolition of all forms of racial discrimination. It therefore maintained no relations of cooperation whatsoever with the racist regimes.

Mr. WEISS (Austria) said that all the declarations, conventions, treaties and covenants adopted in the field of human rights since the creation of the United Nations had always upheld one principle: that of the dignity and equality of all human beings without distinction of any kind. However, after all the programmes of action and decades to combat racism, discrimination based on racism was still very much a part of the lives of millions of people throughout the world. That did not mean, however, that one

(Mr. Weiss, Austria)

must resign oneself to racism's remaining always a part of human relations. Besides, scientific evidence has recently invalidated theories of racial superiority or inferiority on biological grounds.

Psychological studies suggested that even the most compelling rational arguments could not turn around an entrenched prejudice. The importance of formal institutions of education for the elimination of racial prejudice could not therefore be overestimated. His delegation believed that a Third Decade to Combat Racism should follow the Second Decade, and that it should focus on new and emerging forms of racism such as those against migrant workers, minorities, non-citizens, religious groups and indigenous populations.

Over the past 12 months, important steps had been taken towards abolishing the most clearly institutionalized form of racism, the apartheid system: the unbanning of political organizations and movements opposing apartheid, the repeal of the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act and the lifting of the state of emergency. However, policies of racial domination and segregation had led to such a fragmented social system in South Africa and the administrative and judicial branches had lost so much credibility that it had become extremely difficult to establish a new political culture based on tolerance, with the result that violence in the country had increased. His Government hoped that the negotiating process initiated between the African National Congress and the South African Government would continue despite such outbreaks of violence - which the South African Government was obligated to suppress in a strictly impartial manner - and that South Africa would soon become a united, non-racist and democratic country.

With respect to the Committee established pursuant to article 8 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which was supposed to report annually to the General Assembly and make recommendations on ways of tackling racial discrimination in the future, he noted that a number of the Committee's sessions had been cancelled because States parties to the Convention had failed to fulfil their financial obligations in that regard. His delegation therefore called on all States parties that were in arrears to pay their outstanding assessments, especially

(Mr. Weiss, Austria)

since the amounts in question were very modest. It also supported the idea of establishing a contingency reserve fund that could be used to finance the costs of two annual sessions of the Committee.

Mrs. LUETTGEN (Observer for Cuba) said that the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (E/1991/39) presented a broad overview of the activities undertaken and decisions adopted by the various United Nations organs. Those organs had done their utmost in the face of a critical financial situation. Two years before the end of the Second Decade, the increase in racist acts in many parts of the world, particularly against ethnic minorities, migrant workers and indigenous peoples, was cause for concern, as were the criminal activities of neo-Fascist groups. That situation highlighted the urgent need to intensify action at the national level by refining and strengthening legislation to prevent and punish racial discrimination, by encouraging the accession of more countries to international instruments concerning racism and racial discrimination, and by stepping up information and outreach activities through seminars, conferences and publications.

The historical, political, economic, social and cultural factors which fuelled racist acts and xenophobia should continue to be examined. Education and broader and more effective use of the mass media would contribute to achieving objectives in that area. It was also important to establish legal recourse procedures for victims of racism and racial discrimination. In South Africa, apartheid was far from being eliminated and must therefore remain on the agenda of the Economic and Social Council, despite the measures announced by the South African Government, particularly with respect to the application of the principles contained in the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa. Most of South Africa's people continued to suffer under the inhuman apartheid system, and the bloody repression of South Africa's black population was causing more casualties each day. The measures adopted by the international community against South Africa

(Mrs. Luettgen, Observer, Cuba)

must be kept intact in order to help the South African people to live in dignity.

Her delegation drew the international community's attention to the resurgence in the United States of acts of racism and racial discrimination against native Americans, Latin Americans and other minorities. Mention must also be made of the particular case of populations under foreign occupation who could not exercise their right to self-determination and were the victims of discriminatory and racist policies, the most striking example being that of the territories occupied by Israel and their population's internationally supported struggle, the intifadah.

As the Coordinator for the Second Decade had said, racism, racial discrimination and apartheid were relevant to all sectors of United Nations activity because they were negative elements hindering the full achievement of the technical programmes of the Organization, as well as scientific and technological progress, since millions of human beings were denied the benefits of science and technology and were excluded from scientific careers by reason of race. That situation required that the United Nations system redouble its efforts to improve the coordination of all factors that could enhance the effectiveness of the struggle against racism and racial discrimination. In that respect, she noted the decision to hold, in 1991, a joint meeting of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to facilitate an exchange of views on the prevention of racial discrimination. The recommendations of the Subcommission and of the Commission on Human Rights concerning the launching of a Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination should be considered carefully. It had not been possible to implement many of the activities for the Second Decade, and it was obvious that a new stage had been reached in the struggle against manifestations of racism. All Governments, organizations and individuals must be urged to contribute generously to the Trust Fund for the Programme for the Decade so that all of the scheduled programmes could be

(Mrs. Luettgen, Observer, Cuba)

implemented and world public opinion could be mobilized in favour of eliminating racial discrimination.

The commitment to combat racism and racial discrimination was proclaimed in the basic documents of the United Nations, particularly in the purposes and principles of the Charter. The United Nations system had drafted numerous documents, agreements and resolutions on the subject. The effectiveness of such action should be enhanced still further, in view of the current situation, but it was also necessary for Governments to assume their responsibilities with respect to the principles set forth in the Charter, to which they had subscribed.

Mr. DATO (Malaysia) said that the new international environment provided an opportunity for the United Nations to focus its efforts on fulfilling the basic goals proclaimed in the Charter, namely, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction. In the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, the General Assembly had rightly given priority to certain issues, particularly the struggle against apartheid in South Africa, but also to the fight against racism affecting other vulnerable groups such as migrant workers, children of minorities and indigenous peoples.

The report on the implementation of the Programme of Action (E/1991/39) outlined the measures taken by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on Human Rights and other United Nations bodies to implement the Programme of Action and to achieve the goals of the Second Decade. The 1990-1991 biennial plan had led to improved coordination of the activities undertaken by the United Nations system under the Second Decade, progress on the global compilation of national legislation against racism and racial discrimination, the preparation by the Secretary-General of the collection of model legislation called for in paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution 40/22 and the continuation of research work on racial discrimination against vulnerable groups. His delegation also welcomed the adoption by the General Assembly of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

(Mr. Dato, Malaysia)

Malaysia rejoiced with the people of Namibia in their newly acquired independence and in the efforts that they were making to overcome the adverse effects of so many years of racism and racial discrimination. Their victory was an inspiration to others and living proof that the struggle against racism, including apartheid, could only be won through concerted international action. The focus of international attention must now be on the plight of the millions of South African victims of the evil system of apartheid. In the last one or two years, pressure from the black people of South Africa and from the international community had forced the Pretoria regime to adopt measures that would lead to the dismantling of the apartheid system. The practical effects of the measures taken by the South African Government were, however, still limited, and many of the promises made by the South African President had yet to be fully realized. The current violence in the black townships might undermine the process of working towards peaceful negotiations to bring about an end to apartheid.

The failure of the Pretoria regime to respond to various political groups in South Africa by taking concrete measures to end the violence was raising serious questions about President De Klerk's commitment to working out a peaceful negotiating process aimed at establishing a new, unified, democratic and non-racial South Africa. It was therefore imperative that the international community should maintain the sanctions imposed on the Pretoria regime in order to speed up the irreversible process of eliminating apartheid and provide continued support to the millions of blacks in South Africa at the present critical point in their struggle against apartheid, in conformity with the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, adopted by the General Assembly in December 1989.

Malaysia fully supported the recommendation made by the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1991/11 that the General Assembly should take appropriate steps, in due course, to launch a Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, to begin in 1993.

Mr. URIARTE (Chile) said that his country condemned all forms of racism and racial discrimination, including the policy and practice of apartheid. Racial segregation, apartheid and organizations which were founded on hatred and racial discrimination or which sought to impose the domination of one ethnic group over another were foreign to Chile's legal order, and the country's Constitution guaranteed respect for individual freedoms and inalienable rights and consequently the equality of all Chileans before the law.

Chile fulfilled all of its obligations as a party to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, including that of submitting periodic reports to the Committee established by the Convention, and the provisions of the Convention had been incorporated into the Chilean legal order in 1971. Chile also participated actively in the work of the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa and had called for its activities to be strengthened in order to support the legitimate aspirations of the South African people.

It would be recalled that, in the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, adopted by the General Assembly at its sixteenth special session, it had been stated that if there was a demonstrable readiness on the part of the South African regime to engage in negotiations genuinely and seriously, the possibility could be created to end apartheid. While rejoicing that a negotiating process had begun, Chile nevertheless noted that the conditions established by the General Assembly for the restoration of democracy and the elimination of apartheid had not been met by the South African Government. The report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination showed the progress made in coordinating the activities of United Nations programmes relating to the goals of the Second Decade, in particular those of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Centre against Apartheid. In cooperation with the Department of Information, the Centre had taken very important initiatives in the field of education against racism and racial discrimination, initiatives which must be pursued.

(Mr. Uriarte, Chile)

The Chilean Government would not rest until the apartheid system, institutionalized for more than 40 years and rejected by the United Nations as the embodiment of the world conscience and the consensus of the international community, had been removed from the face of the Earth.

Mr. OUDOVENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the improvement in the international climate had given the international community cause to hope for harmonious, peaceful and mutually beneficial relations among all countries. That could, however, only be achieved by ensuring the equality of all citizens before the law irrespective of race, colour, nationality, religion or any other factor.

The Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination was the framework within which the United Nations and its Member States coordinated the many activities in that field. It could even be said that increased integration and interdependence at the world level was conducive to the United Nations playing an even greater role.

The declaration of Namibia's independence had shown that the world was entering a new era of cooperation between States. The Ukrainian SSR, which had always demonstrated its solidarity with the struggle of the Namibian people for self-determination, considered the formation of a new independent State in southern Africa as an event of truly historic importance and a major achievement within the framework of the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. From the resolution of the Namibian problem two important conclusions could be drawn: first, that it was impossible to prevent by force the advancement of nations to freedom and independence; and secondly, that any dispute could and should be resolved through political means without resort to force through negotiations based on the principles of international law.

In South Africa, a process had begun which gave rise to a real hope for the elimination of apartheid in the shortest possible time as well as for the creation of a democratic society in that country. For that to take place, it was still essential, as stated in the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, adopted by the General Assembly

(Mr. Oudovenko, Ukrainian SSR)

at its sixteenth special session, that there should be a demonstrable readiness on the part of the South African regime to engage in negotiations genuinely and seriously.

The circumstances that had made it possible to anticipate negotiations seemed to have evolved favourably. The Pretoria regime had established contact with the African National Congress and had expressed its willingness to negotiate in order to resolve the conflict. It had revoked more than 100 discriminatory Acts and regulations in the country, and the official pillars of apartheid were thus collapsing. The practices and policies of apartheid nevertheless remained deeply entrenched in custom, and the international community should therefore continue to maintain sanctions against the South African regime until there was clear evidence of profound and irreversible change and, once the foundation of a democratic, non-racial State had been laid, in order to promote the establishment of a mechanism for the elimination of all vestiges of apartheid in the everyday life of South Africans.

In the view of his delegation, the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination did not give exhaustive answers to problems such as those relating to coordination, effectiveness, the difficulties regarding the implementation of the responsibilities entrusted to the Economic and Social Council by the General Assembly and the prospects and strategies of joint action by the international community aimed at achieving the goals established by the Programme. A part of the Programme for 1985-1989 had yet to be implemented, as had been pointed out by numerous delegations at the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly. At the same time, his delegation noted with satisfaction the efforts made by the Commission on Human Rights, the Centre against Apartheid, the Commission against Apartheid in Sports and the Intergovernmental Group to Monitor the Supply and Shipping of Oil and Petroleum Products to South Africa as well as by the other bodies whose activities had been extensively described by the Secretary-General in his report.

(Mr. Oudovenko, Ukrainian SSR)

The Ukrainian SSR strongly condemned the ideology and practice of racism in general and of apartheid in particular. The Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination had shown that, above and beyond the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, only the continued adoption of practical measures would lead to the eradication of the practice of racism and racial discrimination.

Mr. SARDENBERG (Brazil) said that the universal equality of all men and women was the keystone of the entire structure of human rights. Racial discrimination, particularly in the institutionalized form of apartheid, was a clear violation of that principle of equality, and, as such, could destroy the structure of human rights. The Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination had widely publicized the issues involved, raising awareness of the evils of racial discrimination and apartheid, and leading to a better understanding of the phenomenon of racism and its causes. Progress had been made in standard-setting, in particular with the adoption of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. Over the period in question, the most outstanding development had undoubtedly been the independence of Namibia and the birth in that country of a new political order based on equality, democracy and self-determination.

Notwithstanding those achievements, various problems persisted to a large extent. The system of apartheid remained in place, although the South African Government had taken steps in the right direction, in particular by announcing its intention of abolishing some of the rules that constituted the main pillars of apartheid. Nevertheless, his delegation was convinced that equal rights for all was not a matter of quantity or degree. Reform would not be satisfactory until apartheid had been eradicated once and for all. As a South Atlantic country, Brazil had many common interests with the people of South Africa, and looked forward to the day when those common interests would be translated into fruitful cooperation with a free and democratic South Africa. To that end, Brazil adhered to the provisions of the 1989 Declaration on

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa. The Brazilian Government considered that one of the most important results of the forty-seventh session of the Commission on Human Rights had been the adoption of a resolution on the situation of human rights in South Africa, in which the Commission had reaffirmed the mandate of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on Southern Africa and reiterated the concepts set forth in the 1989 Declaration.

Brazil was dismayed by the resurgence of instances of racial discrimination and similar phenomena in different areas of the world and by the actions of groups organized on the basis of racial intolerance, groups which seemed to be increasing their activities. The United Nations should also examine the link between racial discrimination and immigration policies. All countries had a duty to promote the elimination of every vestige of discrimination, to ensure greater freedom of movement across borders and to protect the rights of foreigners. The persistence of various problems and the emergence of new instances of racial discrimination underlined the need to implement resolution 1991/11 of the Commission on Human Rights, in which it had recommended to the General Assembly that it should take steps to launch a Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. His delegation was also gratified by the Commission's request that a handbook on recourse procedures for victims of racism and racial discrimination should be prepared.

Under the Brazilian Constitution the practice of racism was a very serious offence, one which was not subject to any statute of limitation and in respect of which no bail could be accepted. The Constitution further provided that the State was responsible for the protection of the different cultures of all the groups that formed the Brazilian people. As a result of successive waves of immigration, Brazil had become a country in which different ethnic groups had harmoniously integrated into society, thereby enriching it with their own cultural perspectives and values. By virtue of its history, Brazil knew that cultural and ethnic diversity was a blessing that brought strength and inspiration, and it thus repudiated racial discrimination in the strongest terms.

Mr. MOULTRIE (Bahamas) said that the equality of all human beings, without distinction, was a principle enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and reaffirmed in various international instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Yet today patterns of racism and racial discrimination were repeating themselves with surprising regularity, creating an upsurge of racial tension between different ethnic communities and prejudice against various groups, including indigenous peoples, as well as conflict in inter-State relations. It was incumbent upon Governments to remain vigilant to ensure that legal equality was, in practice, translated into equal rights for all, and to redress any violation of those rights. The first and Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination had given considerable impetus to the realization of those goals. On the basis of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (E/1991/39), the Economic and Social Council could coordinate, review and appraise the activities of the Second Decade, as well as make suggestions and recommendations to enhance the impact of those activities.

Given that the elimination of racism and racial discrimination necessitated a change in individual attitudes, his delegation favoured a continued focus on education and training and on the dissemination of information. The organization of seminars and workshops was invaluable in that process, as were studies designed to identify and analyse the principal problems and suggest solutions. In that category he included the recent seminar on the political, historical, economic, social and cultural factors contributing to racism, racial discrimination and apartheid, and the study of the Special Rapporteur of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities on the obstacles encountered in meeting the objectives of the first Decade and the first half of the Second Decade. Seminars and studies could, however, have a positive impact only if their conclusions informed government policies on racial equality, and the same was true of the valuable publications now available. Initiatives by the United Nations system to implement the activities of the Second Decade had certainly benefited from coordination of efforts at the inter-agency level, while the

(Mr. Moultrie, Bahamas)

designation of focal points within each Secretariat unit would ensure that the objectives of the Decade were given constant attention.

His delegation considered that the primary objectives of the Decade remained valid. In South Africa the foundations of apartheid were beginning to crumble. Under the pressure of the majority of South Africans and international public opinion, the process of change had begun. That pressure should not be relaxed until the South African Government abolished the acts which constituted the pillars of apartheid, released all political prisoners and permitted exiles to return, and began negotiations on a new constitution to establish a non-racial and democratic society in South Africa. The international community should thus make sure that the promises being made would be kept. In that connection, the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa and subsequent resolutions of the General Assembly must be given the broadest possible interpretation. "Profound and irreversible change" meant much more than the removal of oppressive legislation or formal political equality. Other issues, such as land use, would have to be considered as part of the permanent structural changes needed to close a disgraceful chapter in the history of South Africa.

The Bahamas endorsed the position taken by the Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers on Southern Africa, namely, that sanctions should be maintained until the promise concerning the dismantling of apartheid was translated into concrete action. It was ready to participate in the greater effort to standardize the international response to the changes that were occurring in South Africa, and it encouraged major international actors to cooperate in that endeavour. The report of the Secretary-General on progress made in the implementation of the Declaration, which was to be issued in June 1991, and the recommendations of the Special Committee against Apartheid would provide valuable guidance in that regard. The Bahamas urged that responsible action be taken to stem the violence, particularly that of the extreme right, which was jeopardizing the process of change in South Africa. His delegation commended the Centre against Apartheid for its work in monitoring and analysing important developments in South Africa and for

(Mr. Moultrie, Bahamas)

maintaining pressure on the South African Government in the current critical times. The efforts of other bodies, including the Commission on Human Rights, were equally important at the present time. The Commission should address all aspects of the problem in 1992 when it considered the topic concerning the treatment of political prisoners and detainees in South Africa within the context of the plan of activities for 1990-1993 of the Second Decade. His delegation believed that the topic could already have been taken up in 1991, since the deadline of 30 April that had been set for the release of political prisoners and the return of exiles had not been met.

The Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination would conclude in 1993 and already two significant bodies, the Commission on Human Rights and the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, had recommended the proclamation of a Third Decade. The Bahamas supported the recommendation because of the situation that persisted in South Africa and because it considered that the elimination of racial discrimination was an objective for which the world must constantly strive. A concrete programme of action must be drafted based on the experience gained during the first and Second Decades; however, the programme could not be implemented without resources. In that regard, he recalled that the Programme of Action for the Second Decade for the years 1990-1993 had been incorporated into the regular work programme of the Centre for Human Rights by General Assembly resolution 42/47, but without any increase in the Centre's regular resources. That situation, which had created a serious impediment to programme delivery, must be reconsidered so as to permit implementation of activities planned for the period 1990-1993, and certainly must be addressed with regard to the Third Decade.

The Bahamas attached particular importance to a number of international instruments designed to eliminate racism and racial discrimination, including the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid and the International Convention against Apartheid in Sports. Because of the importance it attached to the implementation of

(Mr. Moultrie, Bahamas)

those instruments, the Bahamas had been pleased to see that funds had been provided to enable the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to have its regular schedule of meetings in 1991. His delegation continued to urge that a permanent solution be found so that the Committee and other treaty monitoring bodies would have the financial and human resources they needed. The Bahamas reiterated its commitment to the objectives of the Second Decade and re-committed itself to support the legitimate struggle of the majority of South Africans for a just, non-racial society.

Mr. SEZAKI (Japan) said that he had been greatly impressed by the important role that the United Nations had been playing in efforts to realize the goals of the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. Since its inception, the United Nations had given high priority to the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination. The issue of apartheid had been discussed every year, and the United Nations had played a crucial role in mobilizing world opinion and coordinating international action; as a result of the concerted efforts of Member States, major progress had recently been achieved towards the establishment of a democratic, non-racial society in South Africa. Japan hoped that the measures announced in February by Mr. de Klerk, which would, inter alia, repeal the laws on which apartheid was based, such as the Population Registration Act, the Group Areas Act and the Land Acts, would be taken at the current session of the South African Parliament. While a number of obstacles to negotiations had been removed, important issues, including that of the release of all political prisoners, had yet to be resolved. Given the escalation of violence, which had claimed nearly 1,000 innocent lives since the beginning of the year, all parties concerned should make every effort to restore peace. The Japanese Government was prepared to facilitate the negotiation process and had recently pledged $3.2 million to finance a UNHCR project relating to the repatriation of South African exiles, and it would continue to provide financial support to the various trust funds and to the Kagiso Trust, a non-governmental organization in South Africa. It would also increase the number of non-white South Africans accepted for training programmes organized by the Japan International

(Mr. Sezaki, Japan)

Cooperation Agency. Furthermore, the Japanese Government had dramatically increased its assistance to member countries of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (from $126 million in 1986 to $231 million in 1989).

The Japanese Government reiterated its commitment to working with the international community to eradicate racial discrimination in South Africa and in the world as a whole.

Mrs. LEGWAILA (Botswana) said that Botswana shared the commitment of the international community to the eradication of all forms of racism and attached the utmost importance to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade. The Council was considering the issue of the eradication of apartheid, a key component of the Programme of Action, against the background of developments in South Africa. Botswana particularly welcomed the measures which had been taken since 1990 and, in particular, the statement of intent made by Mr. de Klerk on 1 February 1991 concerning the repeal of laws which were the cornerstone of apartheid. Thousands of political prisoners continued to languish in jail and hundreds of exiles were still unable to return to their country. The purpose of the White Paper on land reform and the legislation proposed therein appeared to be aimed more at entrenching apartheid by legitimizing ownership of land confiscated from the oppressed people than at seeking to redress past injustices. That approach would not help the process of bringing about the elimination of apartheid through negotiations. After 43 years of institutionalized racism apartheid had become an integral part of the socio-economic and cultural life of South African society. The repeal of racist laws would not in itself mean the end of apartheid. Member States must honour the commitments they had undertaken on 14 December 1989, in adopting the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, and ensure that they did not prematurely reward the oppressor and thereby jeopardize the negotiating position of the oppressed people. International pressure had played a crucial role in forcing the South African Government to proceed to reforms and, as the President of Botswana had stressed in his message to the solemn meeting held

(Mrs. Legwaila, Botswana)

on 21 March 1991 to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the international community must remain steadfast in its efforts until apartheid was abolished. That had also been the thrust of the communiqué issued by the Ad Hoc Committee of heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, which had met in Harare on 7 February 1991. In its resolution 44/244, the General Assembly had called upon South Africa to establish a climate conducive to negotiations so that the oppressed people of South Africa might exercise its inalienable right to elect a government of its choice and to participate in the decision-making process. Violence in South Africa had claimed more than 600 lives between January and April 1991. It was legitimate to wonder whether, had the violence been directed at the white population, Mr. de Klerk would not have put an immediate end to it. The Economic and Social Council must bring pressure to bear on the South African Government so as to put an end to the slaughter.

With regard to the report on the implementation of the Programme of Action (E/1991/39), she supported in particular the recommendation of the Commission on Human Rights concerning the adoption of measures for launching a Third Decade of action against racism and racial discrimination which would start in 1993. She also supported the proposals contained in paragraphs 53 to 58 regarding the coordination of activities of the Second Decade. The UNESCO proposals for improving coordination and cooperation (para. 157) should be studied carefully.

Finally, apartheid must be eradicated before the end of the century and the international community must allocate the necessary resources to implement the plan of activities.

Mr. NDAYIZIGA (Observer for Burundi), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States and also, perhaps, on behalf of the States which hoped that the struggle against racism and racial discrimination could be won as soon as possible, introduced draft resolution E/1991/L.19 and expressed the hope that it could be adopted without a vote.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.